

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 12-34, 38, and 39 are pending in this case. Claims 1-11 and 35-37 are canceled by the present amendment.

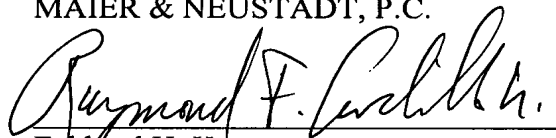
In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 35-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Van Thong et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,505,153, herein "Van Thong"). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Van Thong. Claims 12-34, 38, and 39 were indicated as allowed, and Claims 2-8, 10, and 11 were indicated as including allowable subject matter.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of Claims 12-34, 38, and 39 as allowed and cancel all other claims, Claims 1-11 and 35-37. Thus the rejection of Claims 1, 9, and 35-37 and the objection to Claims 2-8, 10, and 11 are believed to be moot.

Because only Claims 12-34, 38, and 39, which were indicated as allowed, are pending in this case, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Raymond F. Cardillo, Jr.
Registration No. 40,440